

## **The Return of the Nagual Woman**

**An excerpt from *The End Of History***

© 2012 James L. Desper Jr.

The return of the nagual woman, Carol Tiggs, after leaving the world with don Juan and his party, is one of the most controversial aspects of Castaneda's post-apprenticeship history. To understand this surprising development we need first to discuss some of the events that occurred previously.

Don Juan and the old seer known as the death defier did not get along. Don Juan resented being forced to deal with him and the death defier undoubtedly resented don Juan's attitude and the fact that he had no choice but to be a freeloader, a burden on all the naguals of don Juan's lineage. To survive, he had to have energy that he could only obtain from the naguals of don Juan's line. He needed a permanent solution. Being one of the ruthless and self-indulgent old seers, he concocted a plan that he hoped would accomplish this goal and also give him the perverse satisfaction of derailing don Juan's transition to the Third Attention.

Using the mastery of awareness he had cultivated for thousands of years, he intended in the Second Attention a dream world for himself that was an exact replica of a small town in ancient Mexico where he and other old seers had lived. To intend this dream world forward—to hold it in place and maintain it as a viable destination with himself as an inhabitant—he needed much more energy than he alone could provide. To obtain this energy he extracted a large amount from Castaneda during their encounter that occurred (as described in *The Art Of Dreaming*) not long before don Juan and his party were due to leave for the Third Attention.

But his real masterstroke was merging his awareness with that of the nagual woman, Carol Tiggs, prior to meeting with Castaneda. He ruthlessly exploited Carol Tiggs' inexperience and naivety to literally hijack both her awareness and her energy. The nagual woman had such tremendous energy that the death defier hoped, with their combined resources, they could re-route don Juan's entire party to the death defier's dream world and thereby hold it in place—intend it forward—indeinitely. Once they arrived at this alternate destination he would only have to use his mastery of the old sorcerer's techniques to fixate the awareness of the entire group—to freeze the position of their assemblage points—and make the perception of that world the only possible one. The death defier did not seek the total freedom of the Third Attention. He sought the freedom to indulge his eccentricities and desire for power. What better place to do that than an entirely new world where he controlled all he surveyed?

But somewhere in its execution, the death defier's plan failed. The nagual woman's return to this world indicates that he had at least been able to take *her* into his dream world in the Second Attention. If he was able to take any of the other members of don Juan's party there (and keep them there) is not known. We do know that Carol Tiggs eventually escaped the death defier's dream world and

returned to this one a broken woman, her energy sapped. She eventually became a mere pawn in Castaneda's group of followers, a shadow of her former self.

We also know that don Juan and don Genaro did reach the Third Attention since they used the ability—which only inorganic beings have—to project their images back into this world. They did this together once and don Juan did it by himself another time. And don Juan's most powerful apprentice, Eligio, who managed to attach himself to don Juan's party and leave the world with them, communicated with two of don Juan's apprentices (Josefina and Maria Elena) through *dreaming*. This would not have been possible if his awareness had been fixated by the death defier.

Castaneda and his group were shocked to the core by the nagual woman's return and—dimly apprehending what had occurred—began to wonder if don Juan and his entire party were stuck in the Second Attention. But they were too busy with their pursuit of idle pleasures to give the matter much consideration and swept up the nagual woman into their egomaniacal obsessions. When don Juan made his second, solo appearance in this world (in the lobby of a San Francisco hotel in 1991) both Florinda Donner-Grau and Carol Tiggs walked right by him as if he didn't exist. Carol Tiggs later claimed that she had no memory of the entire chain of events after merging with the death defier, so she was unable (or unwilling) to enlighten the others as to what had happened—if they had even cared to know.

What has become apparent, on further consideration, is that don Juan knew something was up and that his entire enterprise could be threatened by the death defier's merger of his awareness with the nagual woman's. He knew enough to tell Carol Tiggs to stash some money in a few hidden places in Tucson, Arizona, where she found herself after returning. If he knew enough to foresee this development, he undoubtedly had enough forewarning to attempt to thwart the death defier's plan. If he had the energy to do so completely, and assure the safety of his entire party (except for the nagual woman), is not known.

An interesting foreshadowing of the nagual woman's fate is to be found in *The Eagle's Gift*. When Castaneda and Maria Elena are first retrieving their memories of the nagual woman from the dream world of heightened awareness, Maria Elena declares that the nagual woman is "shipwrecked" and that they should try to find her. Castaneda then corrects Maria Elena, telling her that the nagual woman was no longer in this world. But he was not really sure of anything at that point.

Richard Jennings (a.k.a. Corey Donovan), a former member of Castaneda's inner circle, has done searches of public records that seem to indicate Carol Tiggs had actually returned several years before she resumed contact with Castaneda in 1985. The embarrassment and humiliation she must have felt over her failure to fulfill her role as the nagual woman and what amounted to a total betrayal of don Juan's trust would certainly explain her reluctance to see Castaneda and his group. Her story of having been gone for the ten years before she re-established contact with Castaneda (and having no memory of that time period) would have been quite useful for the purpose of protecting her from any consequence that could have resulted had Castaneda and his group known the actual chain of events. Jennings was unable to turn up any instance of Carol Tiggs' appearance on the public record between 1972, when she changed her name to Elizabeth Austin, and 1980, when she graduated

from California Acupuncture College. He surmised that she first enrolled there in the fall of 1977, although it could have been as early as fall 1976. According to Castaneda, the nagual woman left with don Juan's party in 1973. So she may have been gone for as long as four years before her actual return.

Her activities upon her return appear to be consistent with what any young woman might do after undergoing a shattering, life-changing experience. She tried to get on with her life by enrolling in school and getting married. Her marriage, however, did not last and she was divorced in 1984, not long before she resumed contact with Castaneda. Amy Wallace (Castaneda's on-again-off-again companion for several years and the author of a book, *Sorcerer's Apprentice*, which documents her experiences with Castaneda and his group) claimed that Carol Tiggs never left in the first place. But she had no direct knowledge to support this claim except for Carol Tiggs' sometimes contradictory statements. At one point Wallace says that the nagual woman "openly admitted to having lived an ordinary life," but provides no details and no direct quotes to support this. Carol Tiggs did attempt to live an "ordinary life" during the years immediately following her return, but for Wallace to draw such a definitive conclusion from the statements of such an over-stressed and psychologically tortured individual certainly amounts to questionable and rather careless journalism. She probably extrapolated this assumption from Richard Jennings' research, which was available when she wrote her book.

Wallace was a witness, however, to Carol Tiggs' seeming obsession with "betrayers" and being betrayed. She devoted a separate chapter in *Sorcerer's Apprentice* to the nagual woman's oft-repeated tirades on this topic; most of which would end with Carol Tiggs saying, "I should know, I'm a betrayer too." Her betrayal of don Juan and his warriors led her to project these feelings onto others.

Wallace believed that Carol Tiggs had merely fallen from favor with Castaneda and that was why she left the group for over ten years. But if that was so then why was her return greeted with such fanfare by Castaneda and his inner circle? The return of a woman whom Wallace referred to as a "near-mediocrity" would hardly justify the mythologizing that resulted. And her public prominence (and major financial participation) within Castaneda's group after her return would not have been conferred upon just another paramour/groupie.

Unfortunately, despite its value in exposing the bizarre and poisonous reality of Castaneda's last few years, *Sorcerer's Apprentice* is filled with errors and inaccuracies large and small that mark it as a textbook example of sloppy journalism:

- 1) Ch. 1, Pg. 7: Wallace says that in *A Separate Reality* Castaneda "met beings from other worlds, which he called *inorganics* (her italics)." In fact, Castaneda only referred to inorganic beings as "allies" in *A Separate Reality*. The term "inorganic beings" was not introduced to describe the allies until the publication of *The Fire From Within*, from which point they were always referred to as inorganic beings, never "inorganics".
- 2) Ch. 1, Pg. 8: Wallace refers to anyone entering the Third Attention "retaining one's body", when a merely cursory reading of Castaneda's work makes it quite clear that the opposite is true.

- 3) Ch. 1, Pg 8: Wallace confuses the Second Attention with the Third Attention; saying that when one burns from within they reach the Second Attention when she should have said the Third Attention. Then in the next sentence she mentions the Third Attention as if it were somehow separate from the level of awareness one reaches after "burning from within".
- 4) Ch. 1, Pgs. 8-9: Wallace implies that Castaneda led his readers to believe that he had the power to read minds at will when he made no such statement. He did say that don Juan had this ability.
- 5) Ch. 1, Pg. 9: Wallace implies that Castaneda led his readers to believe that he had the ability to "shapeshift" at will when in fact he said no such thing. He described incidents where he did indeed change his form, but these occurred only when he was under the influence of don Juan or the female seer known as "La Catalina".
- 6) Ch. 1, Pg. 9: Wallace describes Castaneda's interactions with don Juan's other apprentices resulting in "Castaneda breaking ties with his wards", when in fact they had been informed that he was not a suitable leader for them and so *they* broke ties with *him*.
- 7) Ch. 1, Pg. 13: Wallace says that reaching inner silence was referred to by don Juan as *seeing* when in fact no such equivalence was ever stated or implied. Don Juan was never so careless as to say that the first *step* to *seeing*, reaching inner silence, was equivalent to reaching that level of awareness. Perhaps she was confused when she read Silvio Manuel's incantation for times when a warrior feels his task is greater than his abilities. It reads, in part, "I have no thoughts, so I will *see*." But Silvio Manuel's words of encouragement are meant to be a condensed, shorthand version of a phenomenon that requires other intermediate steps before the goal of *seeing* is reached. Immediately after giving Castaneda the incantation, Silvio Manuel demonstrated the technique of *seeing* human beings as luminous eggs. Castaneda was already deep in heightened awareness, a stable, fixated *dreaming position*, at this point. Silvio Manuel showed him how to focus his eyes briefly on the point of the second attention while engaging intent, and Castaneda *saw*.
- 8) Ch. 2, Pg. 33: Wallace misquotes Castaneda when describing the incident from *A Separate Reality* when don Juan's son Eulalio was killed. Wallace says don Juan "shifted his awareness, moved his assemblage point". However, the concept of the assemblage point was not introduced into Castaneda's writings until *The Fire From Within*.
- 9) Ch. 6, Pg. 57: Wallace says that she does not remember Juan Tuma from Castaneda's books, but he was twice mentioned prominently in *The Eagle's Gift* and listed (as *John* Tuma - an anglicized spelling - but pretty clear nonetheless) as a member of don Juan's party in the Foreword to *The Fire From Within*. In his second mention in *The Eagle's Gift* it is revealed that it was at Juan Tuma's home where Castaneda first had peyote, but Castaneda referred to him in *The Teachings of Don Juan* only as John.
- 10) Ch. 7, Pg. 66: Wallace states that the death defier and Carol Tiggs rescued the blue scout from the inorganic beings' world after they had merged when in fact it was the merging of the blue scout's energy with that of Castaneda's which allowed her to escape the inorganic beings' world. Carol Tiggs, don Juan and other

members of his party rescued *Castaneda* from the inorganic beings' world, but this was prior to Carol Tiggs merging with the death defier, according to the sequence of events described in *The Art of Dreaming*.

11) Ch. 12, Pg. 100: Wallace says that recapitulation was "barely explained in his books" by Castaneda, when it was actually described in minute detail by Florinda (a warrior from don Juan's own party) in *The Eagle's Gift*. It was again described in detail in *The Active Side of Infinity* and its importance was at least mentioned in every book after *The Eagle's Gift* except for *The Fire From Within*.

12) Ch. 14, Pg. 119: Wallace again confuses the Second Attention with the Third Attention when she says that expulsion from Castaneda's group would mean "losing heaven." The Second Attention contains a world that resembles the traditional descriptions of heaven, but what Wallace means to say is that expulsion would mean losing the chance for total freedom—entering the Third Attention.

13) Ch. 15, Pg. 135: Wallace says that Castaneda had written about being a short-order cook in Arizona in his books when it was actually mentioned only in Florinda Donner's book, *Being-In-Dreaming*.

14) Ch. 25, Pg. 213: Wallace says that Castaneda "wrote" that don Juan had cured him of his cigarette addiction with long walks in the desert while "pretending to be lost." There is no such incident (or any such incidents) in any of Castaneda's books. He related this event in an interview with Graciela Corvalan that appeared in *Magical Blend* magazine (#14) in 1985.

15) Ch. 35, Pg. 303: Wallace states that the nagual Julian had "erotically mesmerized a woman who was to become his apprentice," when in fact the woman she is referring to, Talia, became the nagual Elias' apprentice and then became a member of the nagual Julian's warrior party—not his apprentice.

16) Appendix A, Pg. 409: Wallace states that Mark Silliphant was the son of Sterling Silliphant, when he was actually his brother.

This list shows that Amy Wallace' many careless and totally unnecessary inaccuracies—combined with her emotional involvement with the subjects of her book—cast serious doubt on her objectivity and ability to draw credible conclusions as sweeping as her assertion that Carol Tiggs' never left this world at all, but was actually living with her mother and her husband the entire time that she was supposed to be in the Second Attention.

#### Source Notes

*Quotations from Castaneda's books are noted as (Book, Chapter, Page), the number of each book determined by its order of publication as listed in the Bibliography.*

"Don Juan and the old seer" (9,12,234)

"Don Juan resented being forced" (9,13,255)(9,11,213)

"all the naguals of don Juan's lineage" (9,11,214)(9,4,62)(8,3,78)

"ruthless and self-indulgent old seers" (9,11,203&205)

"cultivated for thousands of years" (9,11,207)

"intended in the Second Attention" (9,12,231-232)

"an exact replica of a small town" (9,11,203)

"To intend this dream world forward" (9,13,254&258)

"extracted a large amount from Castaneda" (9,12,239)(9,13,251&255)

"merging his awareness with" (9,13,258); Carol Tiggs, Speech at Tensegrity Workshop, Oct. 8, 1995, Culver City CA., [sustainedaction.org](http://sustainedaction.org); Carol Tiggs, Speech on Cleargreen Field Trip, May 22(?), 1995, Tula, Mexico., Wallace, *Sorcerer's Apprentice*, Ch. 18, Pgs. 155-159.

"inexperience and naivety" (9,10,190-195); Carol Tiggs, Speech on Cleargreen Field Trip, May 22(?), 1995, Tula, Mexico; Wallace, *Sorcerer's Apprentice*, Ch. 18, Pgs. 155-159.

"fixate the awareness of the entire group" (9,10,196-197)

"The death defier did not seek" (7,15,253)(9,11,215)

"sought the freedom to indulge his eccentricities" (9,11,215)

"a broken woman, her energy sapped" Wallace, *Sorcerer's Apprentice*, Ch. 18, Pg. 159.

"mere pawn in Castaneda's group of followers" Wallace, *Sorcerer's Apprentice*, Ch. 36, Pg. 312 & Ch. 37, Pg. 315.

"which only inorganic beings have" (9,5,100)

"They did this together once" (6,2,46-47)

"don Juan did it by himself another time" Wallace, *Sorcerer's Apprentice*, Ch. 3, Pg. 43.

"don Juan's most powerful apprentice, Eligio" (6,12,241)(5,4,212)

"attach himself to don Juan's party" (6,12,241)

"communicated with two of don Juan's apprentices" (6,3,60)

"were shocked to the core" Castaneda, Interviewed by Bruce Wagner in *Details* magazine, March 1994; Wallace, *Sorcerer's Apprentice*, Ch. 18, Pg. 159.

"stuck in the Second Attention" Wallace, *Sorcerer's Apprentice*, Ch. 6, Pg. 63.

"egomaniacal obsessions" Wallace, *Sorcerer's Apprentice*, Ch. 13, Pg. 111.

"walked right by him" Wallace, *Sorcerer's Apprentice*, Ch. 3, Pg. 43.

"claimed that she had no memory" Carol Tiggs, Speech at Tensegrity Workshop, Oct. 8, 1995, Culver City CA, [sustainedaction.org](http://sustainedaction.org); Wallace, *Sorcerer's Apprentice*, Ch. 3, Pg. 44. *(The Sustained Action website began as an attempt by some of Castaneda's most devoted followers to make sense of their experiences within the group. Thoughtful and reasoned discussion, however, soon degenerated into an orgy of self-loathing and doubt. Crude insult replaced any semblance of civility. By the time that Sustained Action morphed into the Sustained Reaction discussion group, the level of discourse had sunk to a grade-school level among anonymous individuals. Assertions and accusations by those who refuse to identify themselves mean nothing. Some of the posts have been very long and involved efforts to add to the chorus of skeptics screaming for Castaneda's head on a stick, but their "scholarship" seldom includes the precise attribution of sources required to convince anyone but fellow cynics.)*

"stash some money" Carol Tiggs, Speech at Tensegrity Workshop, May 19, 1995 Mexico City, Mexico [sustainedaction.org](http://sustainedaction.org); Wallace, *Sorcerer's Apprentice*, Ch. 3, Pg. 44.

"foreshadowing of the nagual woman's fate" (6,6,128)

"has done searches of public records" Jennings (Donovan), Carol Tiggs Chronology Pts. 1-7, [sustainedaction.org](http://sustainedaction.org)

"nagual woman left with don Juan's party in 1973" (6,15,313-314) (10,Introduction,6)(9,11,204)

"get on with her life" Jennings (Donovan), Carol Tiggs Chronology Pts. 1-7, [sustainedaction.org](http://sustainedaction.org)

"never left in the first place" Wallace, *Sorcerer's Apprentice*, Ch. 29, Pg. 243 & Appendix A, Pg. 407.

"having lived an ordinary life" Wallace, *Sorcerer's Apprentice*, Ch. 47, Pg. 389.

"which was available when she wrote her book" Jennings (Donovan), Carol Tiggs Chronology Pts. 1-7, [sustainedaction.org](http://sustainedaction.org)

"Wallace was a witness" Wallace, *Sorcerer's Apprentice*, Ch. 36, Pg. 312.

"merely fallen from favor" Wallace, *Sorcerer's Apprentice*, Ch. 29, Pg. 243.

"greeted with such fanfare" Castaneda, Interviewed by Bruce Wagner in *Details* magazine, March 1994; Wallace, *Sorcerer's Apprentice*, Ch. 18, Pg. 159; Donner-Grau, Tensegrity Workshop, Maui HI, March 24-26, 1995, [sustainedaction.org](http://sustainedaction.org); Castaneda, Lecture at Tensegrity Workshop, Culver City CA, Aug. 1995, [sustainedaction.org](http://sustainedaction.org); Hammond, "Carlos Castaneda's Tensegrity", *Yoga Journal*, Dec. 1995; Castaneda, Lecture at Tensegrity Workshop, UCLA, Westwood, CA, Mar. 1-3, 1996, [sustainedaction.org](http://sustainedaction.org); Epstein, "My Lunch with Carlos Castaneda", *Psychology Today*, March/April 1996.

"woman whom Wallace referred to" Wallace, *Sorcerer's Apprentice*, Ch. 29, Pg. 243.

"major financial participation" Jennings (Donovan), Carol Tiggs Chronology Pts. 4-6, [sustainedaction.org](http://sustainedaction.org); Wallace, *Sorcerer's Apprentice*, Appendix A, Pg. 408.

"1)" (7,6,87)

"2)" (7,7,120)(12,13,192)(10,5,104)

"3)" (9,1,16-17)(7,7,120)(12,13,192)

"4)" (8,6,224)

"5)" (1,10,132-133)(7,9,156)

"6)" (6,3,61-62)(6,4,88)(6,5,110)

"7)" (6,15,309-310)

"8)" (2,5,112-113)

"9)" (6,10,198-199)(6,15,312)(7,Foreword,11)(1,2,23-32)

"10)" (9,7,137-138)

"11)" (6,14,287-292)(8,4,145)(9,8,147-148&150)(10,5,108)(11,6,220-221) (12,10,142-149&158)

"12)" (7,13,215)(7,7,120)(7,Epilogue,295)

"13)" Donner, Being-In-Dreaming, Ch. 4, Pg. 61; Ch. 7, Pg. 110.

"14)" Non-existent passages cannot be cited.

"15)" (8,1,34-44)(8,5,200)

"16)" Jennings (Donovan), Blue Scout Chronology Pts. 1-5, [sustainedaction.org](http://sustainedaction.org)

## **Bibliography**

### **Books**

- Castaneda, Carlos. *The Teachings of Don Juan : A Yaqui Way of Knowledge* (30th Anniversary Edition). Los Angeles and Berkeley, California. The University of California Press, 1998.
- Castaneda, Carlos. *A Separate Reality*. New York : Simon And Schuster, 1971.
- Castaneda, Carlos. *Journey to Ixtlan*. New York : Simon And Schuster, 1972.
- Castaneda, Carlos. *Tales of Power*. New York : Simon And Schuster, 1974.
- Castaneda, Carlos. *The Second Ring of Power*. New York : Simon And Schuster, 1977.
- Castaneda, Carlos. *The Eagle's Gift*. New York : Simon And Schuster, 1981.
- Castaneda, Carlos. *The Fire From Within*. New York : Simon And Schuster, 1984.
- Castaneda, Carlos. *The Power of Silence*. New York : Simon And Schuster, 1987.
- Castaneda, Carlos. *The Art of Dreaming*. New York : HarperCollins, 1993.
- Castaneda, Carlos. *Magical Passes*. New York : HarperCollins, 1998.
- Castaneda, Carlos. *The Wheel of Time*. Los Angeles : LA Eidolona Press, 1998.
- Castaneda, Carlos. *The Active Side of Infinity*. New York : HarperCollins, 1998.
- Donner, Florida. *Being-In-Dreaming*. New York : HarperCollins, 1991.  
(Paperback)
- Wallace, Amy. *Sorcerer's Apprentice*. Berkeley, California. Frog, Ltd., 2003.

### **Articles**

- Epstein, Benjamin. My Lunch with Carlos Castaneda. *Psychology Today*, March/April 1996.
- Hammond, Holly. Carlos Castaneda's Tensegrity. *Yoga Journal*, Dec. 1995.
- Jennings, Richard (Donovan, Corey). Carol Tiggs Chronology Pts. 1-7, [sustainedaction.org](http://sustainedaction.org)
- Jennings, Richard (Donovan, Corey). Blue Scout Chronology Pts. 1-5, [sustainedaction.org](http://sustainedaction.org)
- Jennings, Richard (Donovan, Corey). Florinda Donner-Grau Chronology Pts. 1-12, [sustainedaction.org](http://sustainedaction.org)
- Wagner, Bruce. You Only Live Twice. *Details* (magazine), March 1994.